RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 7th January, 1991/17th Pausa, 1912 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock **Mr. Chairman** in the Chair

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR CHAIRMAN Question No 141

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN Sir, we want to raise an important issue

SHRI V NARAYANASAMY Sir, It is an important issue regarding Tamil Nadu (*Interruptions*) The Tribunal has rejected the claim for interim award for Tamil Nadu to release water to Tamil Nadu (*Interruptions*)

SHRI S K T RAMACHANDRAN Sir, we want water Water, water everywhere but not for the poor agriculturists of Tamil Nadu (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V NARAYANASAMY Sir, the DMK Government have not cared about the issue relating to the interim award For their fault, the farmers of Tamil Nadu should not suffer The entire crop will wither away (*Interruptions*) It is a national issue If the water is not released by Karnataka, the entire crop will perish (*Interruptions*)

SHRI K G MAHESHWARAPPA Sir, should we interfere in the proceedings of the Tribunal? The Tribunal has no jurisdiction to pass an interim order (*Interruptions*)

MR CHAIRMAN: This is Question Hour (*Interruptions*) Question No 141 (*Interruptions*) You have made your po . Question No 141 (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY The Prime Minister of this country should intervene to release water (*Interruptions*)

MR CHAIRMAN. Please take your seats Question Hour has precedence over everything else Question No. 141

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI M S. GURUPADASWAMY: That matter is before the Tribunal The Tribunal

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN There is a procedure in the House You do it after the Question Hour (*Interruptions*) Let us follow the rules and procedures (*Interruptions*) There is a procedure. I am not going to stop you You follow the procedure (*Interruption*) You have made your point If you want to discuss more, you follow the procedure There is a procedure You follow the procedure Let it be done according to rules and procedure Question No. 141

Death of a passenger at Dabolim airport, Goa

*141. SHRI JOHN F FERNANDES Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that a passenger died recently by falling out from a door of an Indian Airlines plane at Dabolim airport, Goa,

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted into the matter, and

(c) whether any compensation has been paid to the next of kin of the deceased and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) An enquiry has been ordered by the DGCA under Rule 77(C) of the Indian Aircraft Rules

(c) Indin Airlines will pay the maximum permissible compensation of Rs 5 00 lakhs to the members of the family of the deceased passenger

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Sir, we can understand the anxiety of the Government to have grounded the Airbus 320 in the name of public safety but the Indian Airlines seem to be very careless towards public safety on the ground From the reply of the hon Minister, we can see that there was callousness on the part of the staff May I know from the hon Minister what action he contemplates to evolve a mechanism to bring better coordination between the air crew and ground staff and whether any such directive has been issued since then

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN Already provisions are there according to which the ladder operator has to operate under certain conditions He has to go up and ask the cabin crew that he is removing the ladder whereupon the cabin crew will close the door, and in case it is not possible, he has put the strap Here, of course, there has been a laxity at Goa and a passenger died Therefore, we own the responsibility and we have reiterated that instructions should be strictly followed

SHRI JOHN F FERNANDES Hon Minister has mentioned in his reply that enquiry is being conducted by the Director General of Civil Aviation I feel this is against the law of natural justice because the fault is on the part of the Indian Airlines and I don't think they should themselves conduct this enquiry I want to know whether the Minister contemplates any change in the rules to see that there is an independent enquiry authority appointed for the purpose

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN As per rules we have already ordered an enquiry and the enquiry report is expected in the next two weeks

SHRI JOHN F FERNANDES I asked whether the Minister contemplates a change in the rules because this is against natural justice When the airlines staff are involved in the case, they cannot themselves enquire into the matter.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN. Existing aircraft rules provide for an enquiry under such circumstances, and we have followed those rules An enquiry has been ordered and we are expecting the enquiry report in the next to weeks, and we will bring it to you.

DR YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI Last night I was travelling from Hydera- to Delhi by A-320 After emplaning, there was a power failure after 15 minutes in the plane and the doors could not be opened even for want of power After 20 minutes or 30 minutes or an hour, all the passengers were asked to get down and they had to wait for two hours because another aircraft was commissioned from Madras and we were asked to get in. This is the third time in the last seven days at Hyderabad that due to some failure or another, A-320 aircraft could not be operated I want to know what steps the Government is taking in that regard Hydraulic failure is a regular feature and the passengers on board A-320 have anxious moments, and they are not sure of reaching their destination safely In view of these developments I want to know what the Government proposes to do as far as A-320 aircraft is concerned, to ensure security and safety of passengers

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN· Though this is not related to the main question, I will look into the matter raised by the hon Member

SHRI A G. KULKARNI Sir, though he is an efficient Minister, I want to bring to his notice the total inefficiency in the Indian Airlines Therefore, I would request him to use his efficiency in improving things in the Indan Airlines What I would like to know is,

MR CHAIRMAN Your suggestion he has followed

SHRI A. G KULKARNI He has just now said. It was said that after the reinduction of the A-320 aircraft, things like delays would be sorted out But they are still not Would he please accept my suggestion? Sir, there are old and emotional passengers like me and there are young like him You can just (*Interruptions*)

DR BAPU KALDATE There are inbetweens also.

SHRI A G KULKARNI Will it be possible for you, Mr Minister, to do like they do in foreign countries? In foreign countries, when a flight is delayed, they announce why it is late and how much it is late Here, nobody says why it is late Only God knows The passengers are just not informed The passenger should be at least told the reason so that there can be solace to his own soul

MR CHAIRMAN Solace to his soul?

SHRI A G KULKARNI. The second thing is, while coming from Bombay

MR CHAIRMAN He will look into your soulful plea

SHRI A G KULKARNI Sir, you are an authority on the Vedas and the soul You can better advise him

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA He should accompany you

SHRI A G KULKARNI Thank you very much

Sir, the point is, there are three things which need the Minister's attention These are complette inefficiency, total lack of maintenance and the arrogance of the staff who serve the passengers (*Interruptions*)

MR CHAIRMAN Come to your question

SHRI A G KULKARNI· I entered a plane after a delay of two hours Okay I did not mind I entered the plane. Again, there was another delay of thirty minutes This sort of thing disturb the passengers (*Interruptions*)

MR CHAIRMAN He is mentioning how the planes are delayed and thereby he is delaying the other supplementaries This is a demonstration (*Interruptions*)

SHRI G G SWELL Half-an-our Discussion

SHRI A G KULKARNI They should announce why there is delay so that we will be safe Sometimes, the tyre gets flat (*Interruptions*)

SHRI G G SWELL This is Question Hour, not Half-an-hour Discussion

SHRI A G KULKARNI: I am asking the question Why do you interrupt?

DR BAPU KALDATE Mr Kulkarni, you should address the Chair

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr Kulkarni, you are such a veteran You are doing like this

SHRI A G KULKARNI We have lost all the systems.

MR CHAIRMAN You are also trying to add to it

SHRI A G KULKARNI Now I come to the serious part (*Interruptions*) There has been disturbance even from you, Sir You ask questions The point is, when a tyre gets flat, it means there is no proper maintenance and in such cases precaution should be taken not to allow the passengers to enter Therefore, as I said, the efficiency of the maintenance staff, the crew and others who serve the passengers has to be totally improved Will you please do something in this regard?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN. Mr Chairman, Sir, though what the hon Member has said is not relevant to the question which was asked, still

MR CHAIRMAN You will take care

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN The hon Member asked a question about the efficiency in the Indian Airlines

MR CHAIRMAN He has also praised you

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN I *must admit that before becoming a* Minister, I had the same feelings which he has Therefore, I am better equipped now to rectify all these aberrations which exist right now For his information and for the information of the other hon Members, I would like to point out that we have created a Cell in the Ministry where we monitor the activities of the vari- various airlines under the control of my Ministry in respect of three parametres One is, punctuality Every Friday, the Chief Executives of all the airlines meet and we monitor the punctuality of each flight Secondly, the seat-load factor is also monitored Thirdly, flight efficiency is also monitored Then, customer service is another very important thing with us right now We try to improve the services in the airlines So far as house-keeping, food catering, are concerned various measures have already been taken We have already introduced new type of food on various routes from Delhi Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad It has already been introduced and the quality of food and representation part is definitely improved Our endeavour will be to further improve the services (*Interruptions*) I can tell you that whatever short time may be, a performance of two to three months is going to be performance of 11 months

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI Sir, the Indian civil aviation is really passing through a critical phase as far as safety is concerned I am terribly worried and nervous about it The bulls, the cattle are entering the runway The doors are opening midway and the passengers are falling from the aircraft This is not funny

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN It has not happened in one month only.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI I am not at all blaming you I am just telling what the situation is today and it is not very funny My report says that when this passenger fell from the aircraft there were no doctors to attend on him The two foreign coupled who happend to be passengers attended on this particular passenger who fell There was no ambulance to carry this passenger Ultimately, if my report is correct, this passenger was carried in a jeep I fail to understand why these things are happening I squarely lay the blame at the footstep of DGCA Various crashes have taken place (*Time Bell rings*) My question is two-fold Firstly, are we going to have a very hard and serious look at the working of the DGCA intself because there is too must of *bhaibhandi*? अरे भई यह तो अपने ही आदमी है इनको मारो, इसको छोडो।

There is a lot of hush up My question is, are we going to have an enquiry into the working of the DGCA? Secondly, as far as step ladder is concerned, there is a particular advice that we must have a hooter The moment the step ladder is taken out, the hooter system should be introduced so that people know that there is some danger in the vicinity and they should keep away from that Would the Ministry of Civil Aviation let me know whether these two suggestions would be taken serious note of or not?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN Sir, the passenger Martin Barrat died and

it is most unfortunate I had already said that we take the responsibility. It is the negligence or carelessness either of the operator of the ladder or of the cabin crew, but the responsibility is ours The inquiry is instituted and we are expecting a report within 2 weeks' time Then we will come to know who was responsible We have taken a serious view of it and whatever norms have been laid down we are trying to enforce them strictly This is what I can assure the House.

Regarding DGCA I agree with the hon Member that the available skelton service that is with the DGCA we are trying to strengthen it further Various measures have been taken to see that the DGCA functions in an efficient manner

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI Are you going to have an enquiry into the working of the DGCA?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN I don't think it is needed

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA From the reply it appears and he has very much accepted that the fault lies with the Indian Airlines The first thing is, is he going to be paid Rs 5 lakhs immediately, before the inquiry is over? But that is not the major issue I have been writing to this Ministry even before the hon Minister came to power that the step ladders are working very inefficiently Even while taking off at Delhi Airport itself the step ladder in the rear side is taken off just about 15-20 minutes ahead of the time Even the children and the old people have to travel from the front gate all the way till the last Similarly, when we land at Jaipur at 10 30 or 11 30, both the gates are not opened Step ladders are not provided at both the places Normally, the practice is that the step ladders should be provided at both the places not only for comfort but for security also Will the honourable Minister ensure that step-ladders are provided at both the places very carefully and no step-ladder is taken off till all the passengers boarded or disembarked? While on the question of safety and security, is it true that fitness certificates to pilots are given as a ritual, without any actual test, due to some carelessness and also because of objections by pilots and, if so, what steps are you taking to avoid such things regularly? Finally, Sir, wheel-chairs are normally not available for more than one About two or three days back I myself tried for a wheel-chair for a passenger at the Delhi airport There were two passengers and only one wheel-chair was provided, and one passenger had to go very slowly Even lifting of the passenger into the plane is done by the wheel-chair only and there is no lifting chair

MR CHAIRMAN You have made your point clear

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA So, will the honourable Minister provide these?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN Sir, I have already given the answer to what the honourable Member has pointed out Regarding compensation, our legal advisers have already tried, twice, to contact the members of the family of the deceased, but contact could not be established My effort is that this issue should be settled as early as possible We have given instructions to the Department to contact the members of the family of the deceased and pay the money as quickly as possible Regarding the ladder, I have already answered that question About wheel-chairs, I will definitely try to improve what the honourable Member has suggested

---

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM REPUBLIC OF KOREA

MR CHAIRMAN Honourable Members, I have an announcement to make